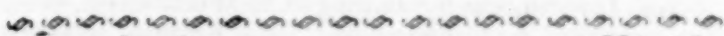



THE Christian History;

Containing Accounts of the Propagation and Revival
of Religion in *Great Britain, America, &c.*


 Saturday OCTOBER 20. 1744. § N^o. 86.


Revival of Religion in Germany continued.

AND within a few Years after him Dr. *Balthasar Meis-*
ner, Professor at *Wittenberg*, who was deeply sensible
 of the great neglect of practical Christianity, through
 the multiplying of Disputes, and particularly of the Stirrs and
 Motions raised against the aforesaid Book of *True Christianity*,
 of whom it appears, that he had laid a Design of opening a
Practical College for the Students of that University, or *Colle-*
gium Pietatis, in which he had determined to treat concern-
 ing the Way and Manner of removing and correcting such
 Things either in Church or State, as do really need the same.
 This is to be seen from his *Funeral Programma*, as also from
 his *Pia Desideria*, or pious Breathings, and wishes for Re-
 formation, published some time after his Death.

§. 21. Next to him we may place *Conradus Horneius*, a
 Man of singular Piety and Zeal for God, who insisting in
 the same Steps, and seriously labouring to promote real and
 practical Christianity, became suspected of not being ortho-
 dox in the Article of *Justification*: And so falling into the
 Odium of the more rigid Lutherans, underwent by that
 Means many severe Oppositions and Hardships. As also, not
 to insist here too long, did Dr. *Andreas Kessler* Superintendent
 at *Coburg*, suffering much for his reprovng the publick Abu-
 ses and Vices: Together with Dr. *Arnoldus Mengeringius*
 Superintendent of *Hall*; Dr. *John Mathew Mayhart*, Professor
 and Pastor of *Erfurt*, who witnessing against the corrupt
 State of the *Universities*, drew upon himself thereby the ha-
 tred of many of the learned Men; Dr. *John Schmidius* a
 Professor at *Strasbourg*, noted for his great Moderation and

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Piety;

Piety ; Dr. *Justus Gesenius* of *Hanover*, Superintendent General, invidiously accused of *Arminianism* ; *Solomon Glassius* of *Sax-Gotha*, whose Verses upon Dr. *Gerhard* made some suspect him as a Favourer of *Fanaticism*, and put him to the trouble of Apologizing ; the most candid *Saubertus*, whose Moderation, when he could be tax'd for nothing else, got him the Character among the litigious of a *Syncretist*, his Disciple *Dilberus*, who by treading in his Master's Steps, could not avoid the same Censure ; and *John Valentine Andree* a Divine of *Wurtemberg*, who had a very high Veneration for the aforesaid *Saubertus*, and printed a Book, which he calls *His Ghost*, giving therein a Character of the true Christian Spirit, and of a faithful evangelical Pastor. This *Andree* being a Person of a very piercing Wit and Understanding, of Solidity of Judgment and Prudence, and well exercised from his Youth in all the Affairs of Religion, had such an insight into the State of the Lutheran Church in particular, as very few of his Age had : But while having discovered the *Disease*, he studied how to apply a *Remedy*, he could expect to fare no better than all others, that went before him. Of whom it is to be noted, that one of the greatest Lights that ever was in that Church, within a few Years past, publicly declared such a Value for him and for his Writings, as to say, that if he were to wish for any one to rise again from the Dead, for the putting Matters to right amongst them, and for the well settling the Church, he should be along while in deliberating, whether he could find one to prefer before him. Besides these there might also be mentioned D. *Paulus Tarnovius*, that eminent Divine of *Rostock*, who printed a Dissertation against the *new Gospel* ; and *Theophilus Grosgebauer* a Deacon of the same Church of *Rostock*, who in the Year MDCLXI, left the Church a Legacy at his Death, which with the Approbation of the Faculty of Divines of that University and their Preface to it, was then printed not without a great Blessing ; 'tis called, *The Watchman's Voice*, being written in High Dutch, and contains a Discovery of the Causes of the Decay of Christian Piety, and of the Unsuccessfulness of the Word of God, and of the Sacraments in the evangelical Churches for the promoting a real Conversion in Souls.

§. 22. This is that Book, which by God's Blessing upon it became the Means of first opening the Eyes of Dr. *Spener*, and which made him to look more into what is solid and Interior,

terior, who thereupon the next Year frequently confer'd with Dr. Raith, he being a very good Divine, they living then both at *Tubing*, so that they had Opportunities of freely discussing the Subject of it, and of examining into the Causes of the Abuses in the Administration of the Word and Sacraments, and consequently of the little Edification of the Laity; together with the Remedies fit to be applied. This was in the Year MDCLXII: From whence some therefore have dated the *Rise* of this whole Affair, which has made such a Noise in *Germany* for some Years past. And about the same Time at *Rosstock* there were Dr. *Muller*, Dr. *Lutke-man*, and Dr. *Quistorp* Junior, who both by their Writing and Preaching, laboured very much to prepare a Way for a better State of the Church, and for the Advancement of solid Piety in its Members. The first of these suffered a great deal of Contradiction by some of the more rigid *Lutherans*, on Account of some Expression which he us'd in a Sermon on 1 Cor. 12. v. 2. and was this, viz. *Our modern Christians and superficial Pretenders to Religion, have four dumb Idols which they Worship, and these are* (1) *The Pulpit.* (2) *The Font.* (3) *The Altar,* and (4) *The Stool of Confession*; which put him to the Trouble to apologize, and to apply himself to some of the most eminent Divines to have their *Determination*; who then gave it in his Favour, and approved of this his Expression, as whereby he only rejected the *Opus operatum* People too much dote on. He died in the Year 1676, choosing for his Funeral Text, *Jer.* 51. v. 9. The like did Dr. *Kortholt* under the Name of *Theophilus Sincerus*, Dr. *Hartman* Superintendent of *Rotenburg*, *Reiserus* and several others. But as for Dr. *Spener* he became as it were the very Soul in this Cause: And having a deep Inspection into the decayed lapsed State of Christendom, he wrote and published a Book, long before the Name of *Pietism* was brought into Use, as being deeply affected with the Sense thereof, called *PIA-DESIDERIA*, wherein he shews evidently the *Apostacy* of the Spouse of Christ from her first Love, with the Abuses and Corruptions consequent hereof, and then proposes such *Methods*, by which the same might be in some Manner redressed. Among which one was this, that he caused to appear again such *mystical* and spirital Books of the best note, as had lain quite buried hitherto, and which could not but be true *leading Stars* to the hidden Path of Life, and blessed Imitation

of Christ. Wherefore he published *Tauler's* Postill with a Preface, *The German Theology*, *Arndt's* True Christianity, and *T. AKempis*, and failed not of his Ends therein, in that both before the Motion of *Pietism*, as also afterwards, many were disposed and induced by these to embrace the Practice of true solid Christianity and the Power of Godliness. And since he was chosen of God for a *peculiar Instrument* of a more practical Reformation, he was accordingly by divine Providence put into such Places, where the Lord in this dark Night of Apostacy could best make use of him according to his Pleasure: Hence it will be worthy of our Observation to see, what his main and principal Work was in the *three* great Places, where he has been intrusted with the Pastoral Care of the Lord's Flock, *Frankfurt*, *Dresden* and *Berlin*, where he was living since this *Narrative* was in the Press, and is newly departed hence, his Works following him into Eternity.

§. 23. In *Frankfurt*, whether he was called in the Year MDCLXVI, he kept *Collegia Pietatis*, or Exercises of Piety in his own House twice a Week, where he gave first his own Exposition on some Chapter of the sacred Scriptures, with suitable Exhortations tending much to Edification. Afterwards he allow'd also others, whose Mind and Senses were exercised in the Word of God, tho' not Divines by Profession, to bring forth any Experience or spiritual Meditation, that was upon their Spirits. (a) Which being done under his Directorship, was accompanied with a great heavenly Blessing: So that he left there a Seed of many pious and well disposed People. When first this private College or Meeting came to be open'd, it was soon noised about, some praising and more blaming it, but *Dr. Spener* well knowing, that a Servant of God, ought not to stick to go through *evil* Report and good Report, (which apostolical Expression he was often heard to cite, when acquainted with the Censures of others) was little hereat concern'd. Abundance of People coming to *Frankfurt* flocked to this Meeting intending private Devotion, to hear what the meaning of this *religious Novelty* (as they stiled it) was: And although the most Part went on no better Principle or Motive than that of meer Curiosity,

(a) Vid. omnino *Speneri* Cofil. Theol. Tom. 3. Pag. 103. III Seqq.

may or even on an ill Design, nevertheless it has been observed, that the Lord has made this an Hour of *Visitation* to many a Soul, upon hearing the convincing Discourses both of the Doctor and of some other good Christians there assembled. Nay even those, who endeavoured to suppress it, blew up more and more the Fame thereof, so that occasionally 'twas frequented by Professors, Superintendents, nay, by Imperial, Royal, Electoral, &c. Ministers, and now and then by Persons of the best Quality happening to come to Town. (b) Nay further the whole Faculty of Divines at *Kiel* in *Holsatia* approved of it, and by a particular Responsum or Determination spoke in the Favour of Dr. *Spener*, which prov'd no small Discouragement to those, who in what they act and judge are rather moved by *Accidental* Determinations, than the very Oracles of divine Scripture.

§. 24. In his publick Sermons he preached here A. 1676, and Part of 1677, a whole Year upon the *Necessity* as also *Possibility* of Practical Religion; shewing hereby the great Obstacles that are pretended, to be altogether unable to hinder the Advances of a willing Mind. Now his peculiar Character being *Candor* and *Humility*, with Condescension, even to the meanest of the Household of God, whom he endeavoured, as well as the high and great Ones, to bring to a Sense of Piety; this made him to go up and down to their Houses, to instruct them in what is necessary to Salvation. And because his Moderation was so greatly eminent, he was there not only loved and esteemed by the *Lutherans*, but also by many of the *Calvinists*, of whom many came to frequent his Church. But among what happened with him, whilst he was at *Francfurt*, must not be omitted a Passage worthy of our Observation in this Place, which is, that his tender Care and Love for the Poor had then already so taken up his Heart and Head, that he was most busy in labouring and contriving, how to set up an Hospital to maintain them. In which Enterprize he met at first with a great Opposition from the Magistracy, who upon his Application to them, answered, they were incapable of maintaining such a Number of Poor. But he not discouraged or beaten down

(b) Vid. *Speneri* Responf. Theol. Tom. 3. Pag. 223. et 548. Seqq.

by their denial, prevailed notwithstanding and carried their Consent by this Argument, that if they had been able hitherto to maintain the Poor in a confused and irregular Way thro' their going up and down in the Streets, (since none had yet starved for want of Bread) how much more would they be able to do the same, in a Way more orderly and regular; which gain'd so much on them, that the good Doctor's Desire and Travail of his Soul was answered. And this happy Success in so laudable a Cause, made him afterwards, when Professor *Frank* was about erecting his Hospital, so chearful and ready in assisting him therein, as also in forwarding and promoting the same to his utmost Capacity. In order to which he caused a Sermon on the *Duties of the Poor* to be printed, which was dedicated to all the Poor in *Germany*, and subjoined to the first Edition of this Professor's Account of the Orphan House.

§. 25. Now further seeing that Dr. *Spener's* Work, which the Lord had cut out for him to do, was not to terminate in *Frankfurt*, and seeing also, that a new Period of a more universal Reformation in the Church of God in general, as well as in the Lutheran in particular was at Hand, wherein he could further promote the Cause of God, and be a true Labourer in his Harvest, He was called to *Dresden* to be the Elector of *Saxony's* first Chaplain, tho' he was unwilling to leave his beloved *Frankfurt* (as he calls it.) God ordering it so in his holy Providence, that upon the breaking out of *Pietism* (which happened not long after his Settlement in this Function) the Instruments by whom God was pleased to raise it first, they being yet but young Beginners in the *practical Part* of Religion, and either but Students of Divinity or Masters of Arts, might have some Assistance and Support from a grave and experienced Divine (which they had indeed occasion for) who by being accustomed to the Opposition and Difficulties, which the Enemy uses to lay in the Way, might in like Manner carry them through the same; and so be a considerable Help and Promoter of *Piety*, for which he was also by the Adversaries in Way of Derision called, *The Patriarch of the Pietists*. This he knew nothing of in the Beginning, when he was sent for from *Frankfurt*, which was in the Year MDCLXXXVI, that he might succeed Dr. *Lucius* in the Court of *Dresden*. In the mean Time the Elector *John George* the Third, was no Admirer at all of his public Sermons,

mons, which were seasoned with the Salt of the divine Wisdom, and were most quick and piercing to the very Heart ; and much less still could he bear with his *private Visits*, wherein he would hold him in an unpleasing Conference and Intercourse about his future State, dealing plainly and roundly with him as an Embassador of God and Christ, and manifesting the only Way to true Happiness both here and hereafter. For the House of *Saxony* which had been heretofore the Support and Prop of the Reformation, was then in a visible Declension as to Matters of Religion. But notwithstanding this indifferent Reception at the said Court, lest the Grace of God, and the Call for which he was sent hither, should prove fruitless, he begins here at *Dresden*, to set up in his own House the *catechizing of little Children* : Which succeeded so well, that he was quickly crowded with their Numbers. Whence followed Reflections upon him from the University-Professors, who thought it unbecoming, that such a Man both of great Parts and Learning, and withal in such an eminent Station, should stoop to so mean and vile an Employ in their Eye, as the teaching and catechizing of Children. But the Doctor little regarding this, saw well enough, that the Basis and Ground-work of Reformation was to be laid in little Children ; old People being grown for the most Part inflexible, and unwilling to forsake the Darling of their accustomed Formalities or Opinions : And therefore he accounted it rather to be the true Character of a real Divine, to feed both the *Sheep* and the *Lambs* of Christ. During his stay at *Dresden* he published one of his most excellent Pieces of practical Divinity, wherein he did set forth the *discriminating Marks*, whereby to discern the workings of *Nature* and *Grace* from each other ; which being a Point of most needful Observation to all ghostly Pastors and Teachers, and of great Use to them on the Account of their Hearers, that so a just Application may be made to their several States, he dedicated it to the *Clergy of Saxony*, in a sort of *pastoral Letter* to their whole Body, exhorting them to a faithful Discharge of their Duty in looking to the Flocks committed to them. He published here also a Set of Sunday-Sermons, called, *Evangelical Duties* ; In which he endeavours to shew the Difference betwixt the Graces and Virtues that are truly *Evangelical*.

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and do proceed from a Principle of divine Charity in the Soul, and those that are merely *External* or but *Moral*. Which he dedicated to his present Majesty King *Frederick of Prussia*, then Elector of *Brandenburgh*: Who had sent him a *Vocation* and Commission, that he might accept of a Prepositure or Superintendency of some Part of the Lutheran Churches in his Dominions, with which, as seeing the Hand of God in it, he readily complied; especially also since the *Elector of Saxony*, being not over-fond of his awakening Sermons, was soon prevail'd on to part with him. This Set of Sermons was printed in the Year 1692. in 4to.

§. 26. In this new ministerial Function he was scarce settled, when it pleased God to increase and enlarge the new Reformation of *Pietism*, even in the large Dominions of the then Elector of *Brandenburgh*, and therefore it fell out about the same Time, that the new University at *Hall* in *Saxony* belonging to *Brandenburgh*, was projecting and in a solemn Manner Inaugurated. Here now our Dr. *Spener* was made again beneficial and useful, not only bringing some of the principal Authors of *Pietism*, that were little favoured and persecuted in other Dominions, into *Brandenburgh*, where they were gladly received in the New-founded University of *Hall*; but also having proved ever since no small Promoter and Supporter, both to the Professors of Divinity there, by the World called *Pietists*, as also to all the pious Foundations erected there and elsewhere within the Territories of that Prince, yea also much beyond them, and indeed to the whole Protestant Reformation in general, and the Churches of the Dispersion, till about the Beginning of *February* in this present Year MDCCV, he received his *Quetus* by the Will of God, being sweetly translated hence as in the Chariot of divine Love and Peace, and leaving his Name as a most fragrant Perfume to Posterity.

(To be finished in our next.)